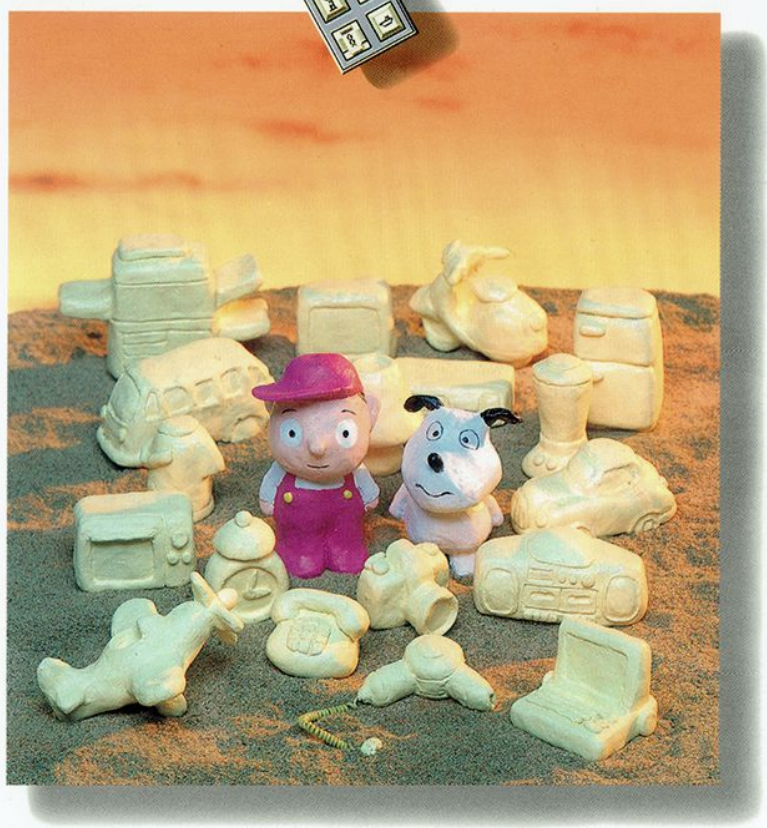
MEGA-CD公式ガイドブック

SWITCH



監修/SEGA office.I

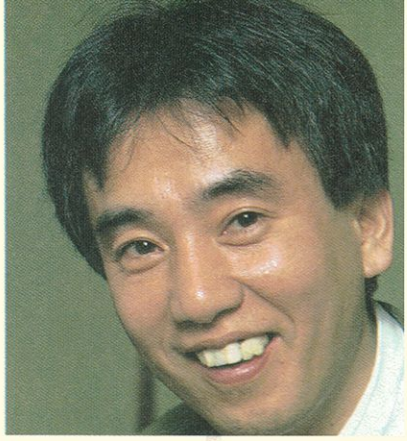
~Translated by Bruno de Figueiredo ~

WC ワンダーライフスペシャル 小学館

BIG3 座談会

This game will be a hit in ten years!

Even if you understand hardware that doesn't mean you're good at creating software!



Tabe: Tani-San, do you watch anime or read manga?

Tani: I used to read a lot of manga. I iked absurd manga, so I read Yasuji Tanioka, Fujio Akatsuka, etc. I don't keep up with it lately, though.

Tabe: Lately, it's been really strange interesting. What do you think about Yoshida Sensha's work?

Tani: Ah, it has a similar feel to WAHAHA-HOMPO, his manga books are really amazing and matchless. He draws full pages filled with figures with dislocated jaws, the way they distort is something no real human can ever do.

Tani: Recently I've been using makeup but with computer graphics, it's amazing. You can easily make ridiculous faces.

Tabe: Come to think of it, in "Denpa Shounen" the faces of people talking change shape and move away, it's really interesting.

Tani: That kind of thing can be done with a computer. Speaking of CG, "The Terminator" is outrageous. Our brains can't comprehend it at all.

Ishii: Even in games, computers draw animations. Ths time, Sega has installed some amazing computer graphics equipment for the production of SWITCH. Kinoshita-San, you've seen it, haven't you?

Kinoshita: Yes. But CG animation is basically divided evenly. The frames are divided evenly according to the movement. But that doesn't provide enough cushioning for animation, so animators add and remove things, various new movements emerge from this.

Tabe: this time, I taught the younger members of the staff on set a lot of things, like jokes and anime, but they don't seem to understand.

Kinoshita: I guess so. Japanese people's body movements are small. Whatever they do, they don't overdo it like Italians That's what comes out of Japanese Anime. For example, in the case of American animation we see very exaggerated movements, but it's quite difficult to make those movements look natural.

Tabe: In SWITCH there's a scene where the eyes pop out and we have to make have to make it more interesting based on the sotryboard that Kinoshita-San drew, but the people on the production site don't know how to make it work. They can design complicated macines, but they can't do the software part.

So I thought that from now on, the world of games won't be interesting unless a lot of people from other creative fields participate in their production.

Ishii: SWITCH is apparently the first game to include stage direction.

Was the manuscript book on which the storyboards were drawn really over 10 cm thick?

Ishii: SWITCH had 8000 different character patterns. Kinoshita-San really did a lot of storyboarding for us.

Kinoshita: There are staff members who don't want to work with Tabe-San anymore.

Ishii: I bet there are a lot of them! (laughs)

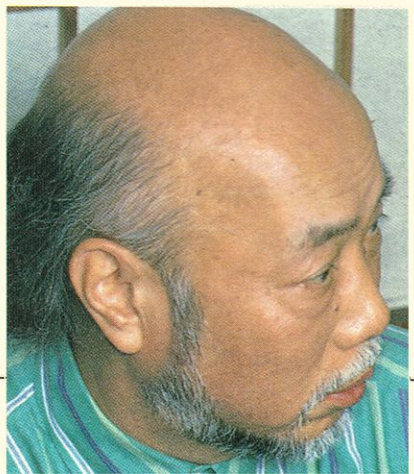
Tabe: I wrote te storyboard and handed it to Kinoshita-San and told him that if he had any other interesting ideas, to please keep writing them, and he always had a few for each scene. There were some that only a person who can draw could think of. Eventually I would get it and tell him I would include it.

Kinoshita: Usually for most other applications, a storyboard only needs a few pages, but the one for SWITCH was indeed over 10 centimeters thick.

Tabe: You feel like you've been tricked, right?

Kinoshita: I feel like I've been tricked again. I guess this is revenge for "Gebageba 90 Minutes" (laughs).

Tabe: When actually inputting the jokes into the computer you need a storyboard for every joke. Even if you have a picture and tell a staff member "you can do this, right?", they weren't able to. They didn't understand what the joke was until I showed them a storyboard, or even acted as their teacher in various stages of the process.



SWITCH
A message from experience

KYOKO OKAZAKI

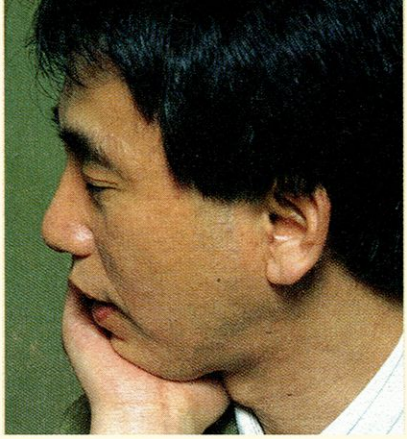
The penguins had some impressive wing movements, which is something SEGA had worked very hard on. The feeling of frustration was also satisfying, but this game isn't made for impatient people. I think it is best suited for someone with a solid continetal build.

SWITCH
A message from experience

Masakazu Amahisa

I thought it was funny because I could see various jokes. The colours on the screen are bright, so you can turn off the lights in the room and still lookg for things, and it would be nice to write a letter to someone you like by the light. I recommend it.

Ishii: Monty Python said they weren't available so Tabe-San had to bring his professor's laser pointer.



Music can also fix an image

Kinoshita: There is some music that allows you to imagine pictures when you listen to it.

Tani: In those cases which is better to do first? In the case of this game, I created the music without any pictures or anything.

Tabe: This time, I think it's good that music comes first. It really expands the imagination. You can picture the images just by listening to the sound.

Tani: When the music and images overlap, it feels like I'm being erased. Music has the effect fo solidifying an image. For example, even if you're watching a war video, when the music plays in the background, you're taken in by the idea that these people are fighting for a just cause. Or it can feel dangerous if the music says that it's dangerous.

Ishii: By the way, I heard that each of the "jagajaga" voice sounds in the opening theme were made by a different person.

Tani: Yeah I was singing like "jaga!", "jaga!".

Tabe: When we were making the sample sounds for SWITCH, Tani-san was making music by hitting things in his house, and that was really amusing. I'd love for Tani-san to try making sounds by himself like Prince does, and make his own music CD.

Tani: Nowadays it's easer to make music by yourself with a synthesizer. You just layer sounds. You only need to create the idea, and the rhythm will continue. Music functions have also improved a lot. But I can't operate a keyboard so I have to make sounds using what I'm good at, so that might be difficult.

Kinoshita: I guess music is one with the body, after all. Your body feels the rhythm. With anime, you may end up overthinking things in your mind. I don't think that's cool.

The world of comedy that began with fan mail

Tabe: When did I start with this industry? What started me off were the fan letters I sent to Tani-San. They were mostly criticisms. I would ask for his thoughts about my jokes. I wrote them thinking that he would never read them.

Tani: Come tot hink of it, you like science fiction, don't you?

Tabe: That's right. I also wrote things like short science fiction stories and sent them to Tabe-San. I send them to him without even asking him (laughs). Then, about a year later, I received a card for New Year's Eve. Of course, I immediately assumed that someone else had written it using the address and everything, but at the end of the letter, it said "Gachōn". I was overjoyed, thinking that maybe it was his own handwriting. Then, one day, I really did get a letter from Tani-san. It started with "I..." , using that really old-fashioned style. I still treasure it as a family heirloom (laughs).

Checking out the characters of SWITCH with my grandchildren

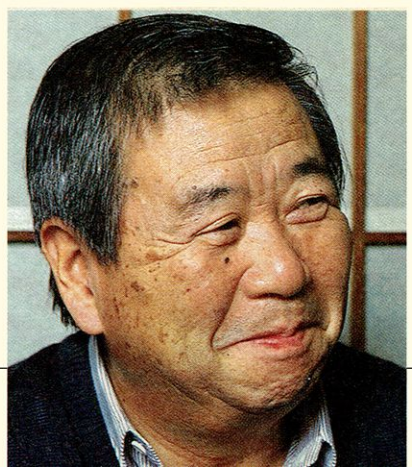
Ishii: Has your grandson made any progress playing SWITCH?

Tani: Yes, I watched the final march sequence together with my grandson. Well, there are a surprising number of characters that appear in that sequence, so I was looking for the ones that I had not seen before. My grandson seemed to like the vomit scene though he wasn't too keen on the distruction part.

Tabe: Kinoshita-San hasn't seen the game yet, has he? I'm curious to see how the storyboards turned out in the final game.

Tricking a big corporation into creating something different?

Kinoshita: What surprised me this time was that when Tabe-San said he wanted to do something like this, Sega gave him permission. Or, rather, it's more of a case of them being generous.



Tabe: They were tricked by me (laughs).

Kinoshita: At film festivals abroad, you can find animation movies for adults. In Japan, people think that anime is only for children.

There are many movies produced, but they are all made for children. That's fine, but I think there should be more anime for adults. To reak that trend, it might be a good idea for someone like Tabe-San to make a game.

Tabe: You have to trick them. Television stations, game companies, etc. (laughs). If you don't trick them, they will never let you do what you like.

Ishii: Before making this game I was talking to someone at Sega about how there wasn't any software that adults could enjoy, so I consulted with Tabe-San andt he idea for SWITCH came up. But it was hard to get them ↗ to understand Tabe-San's intentions.

Tabe: Yes, it was hard. It's too simple and boring. That's all they said. Even if I said that I was intentionally making this game simple, they didn't understand. They kept saying, "Technically, we can do more". He deliberately made the animation simple, and the sound simple, but he wanted to pack in all the latest technology for the sound and the images.

Ishii: As a game engineer, I guess a simple game just doesn't satisfy them.

Tabe: If a videogame fan plays SWITCH, they're probably going to wonder what the heck it is, but I wanted to achieve something like the appeal of playing a guitar for the first time.

A grand adventure meant to be enjoyed ten years in the future?

Tabe: Actually I wanted more fun, like characters making boring faces when they're shown boring gags.

Kinoshita: That's difficult. All the staff members have ↗ have a lot of experience in comedy. You can't make meaningless movements without a career in gags! Right? Gags start with things like someone suddenly falling down in an unrelated place.

Tabe: It's hard to teach all of that. You can't understand the importance of useless things unless you spend a lot of time doing it. By the way, a French comic artist is currently making a big hit with a manga he spent about ten years drawing.

Kinoshita: That's very French.

Tabe: That's right. He writes and writes so much for the creation of backgrounds. That kind of thing is popular, isn't it?

Ishii: When I met the French Minister of Culture, I spoke to him about it and he said that in France, you get many famous people appearing from fields like fine arts and fashion, but not so much from animation movies. But he said it's fine to let them remain hidden. But they still give money to people who do that kind of thing. In Japan, they give money to things that are already finished, but they never sponsor unknown things, whether it's art or anything else. Even if you ask the Ministry of Education to give money to make something like SWITCH, they definitely won't give it (laughs). ↗

Tabe: It's amazing that Sega gave the money. Even Shogakukan is surprised that they decided to publish this book! (laughs) But even with movies, good things don't come about unless there is a margin. Movies and other things used to flop, but there are a lot of things that become hits after 5 or 10 years, right? I think it will be ten years before people understand what SWITCH is like. In that sense, I think it was a good thing that you we all took a gamble on this project.

I'd like to see more games that get you into trouble because you wen't too far

Ishii: What kind of games are you playing right now, Tani-San?

Tani: I'm playing an old version of Bomberman. I've finished up to level 50, but now I'm playing levels 1-10 again, bit by bit, and enjoying increasing the number of bombs.

Tabe: Tani-San, I think it would be good to do a surgery simulation. I think it's coming out soon. It's not on a home console yet, but I think it'll be. There's one where you look for bad parts and cut up organs.

Tani: So you don't have to wear a lab coat or a mask?

Tabe: (laughs) You can just do it yourself. Wear a lab coat in front of a TV screen.

Tani: I guess you have to wear a lab coat to do that (laughs). I've tried a lot of simulations, but I just can't get any further. Even with flight simulations, there are lots ↗ of interesting things further ahead, but I can't get that far into those games.

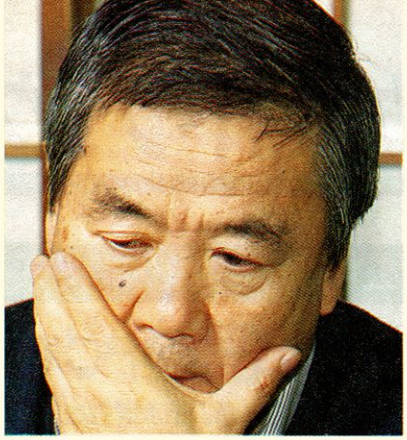
Tabe: I wish there were more games that just charge ahead — the kind where I'm still trying to take it all in, but the game's already moving on without me.

Ishii: I'm sure you'll do that kind of thing in the future. Because you want to see scenes you haven't seen yet.

Tabe: That's right.

Tani: In that respect, SWITCH is quite deep. I'm curious if there are any jokes I haven't seen. No matter what I make, I'm left with a lot of frustration.

Tabe: There's a game I'd like Kinoshita-san to make. It's called *Metamorphosis*, or transformation, where lines, dots, and colors change every time you press a switch.



That kind of thing is based on an artist's ideas. You can't do it unless you really have that mindset.

Kinoshita: They're traying to make me do it. (laughs)

Tani: What about the Rorschach test in SWITCH?

Tabe: That's close to the idea, but actually, I'm very dissatisfied with it. When I'm acutally inputting it into computer, I think it's not right, but I can't explain how to do it and I can only say whether it's right or not. That kind of thing has to be done by someone who draws pictures. I still have a lot of dissatisfaction with this game. I'd like to use those things next time, though.

Ishii: SWITCH 2? (laughs)

Tani: It'st he same with acting. I'm never satisfied. Even when I do pretty well, I'm left with the regret that I could have done better. Are computer nerds secretly enjoying the "Gachōn" sound effects?

Tabe: When we were making the game, I was happy because we used a lot of "Gachōn" sound effects in it, but the staff played with their own computers to make those sounds.

Ishii: When you save, it makes a "Buhyo" sound.

Kuu: It's not something that's released to the public at all, but computer geeks are playing with it secretly in places like that. For some reason, Bakabon's dad's face suddenly appears in an unrelated place, and you hear a "Gachōn" sound every time you do something.I thought it was amazing, it's great, and I can do things like that. But even though they're playing like that, that sense of fun doesn't really come out in the game. I don't have any expectations for the Switch to sell well.

Ishii: The Switch is the first game to use the full capacity of the CD-ROM. People in the game industry seem to be paying attention to it, but I wonder what the general public will think once it's out.

Tabe: I don't have any expectations for sales (laughs). I'm happy if just one person finds it interesting. This one is a long shot. It could be a big win or a huge miss! (laughs)

Ishii: Opinions are split down the middle even within Sega.

Tabe: This is boring to anyone with common sense (laughs). There are products like this that don't sell in every industry. In that situation, you only notice it when it becomes a hit. Because it's common knowledge that it won't be a hit, people with common sense don't accept anything different. As such, everything that comes out are rehashes of what's already been done before.

Ishii: It's the same as when Dragon Quest came out and people said it wouldn't sell, but once it did, everyone started making the same kind of thing.

Tabe: That's true. But I still don't think the SWITCH will sell (laughs). On TV, everything is judged by the ratings, but there needs to be a revolution in the will of the people making it, that it's not like that.

Kinoshita: Japan likes to pander, or rather, they only make the same kinds of things that sell.

Tabe: In the end, everything is just hindsight. If you think something is boring, then you should just say it's boring. If you think it's interesting, then say it's interesting. I'd like to hear someone's real opinion, not something they say after hearing what others think. If there are people who can enjoy silly things, then we're still doing okay.

Ishii: There are people who say, "I want to buy a Mega CD and this game just because it has the Gachōn machine".

Tabe: That was something I added purely for fun.

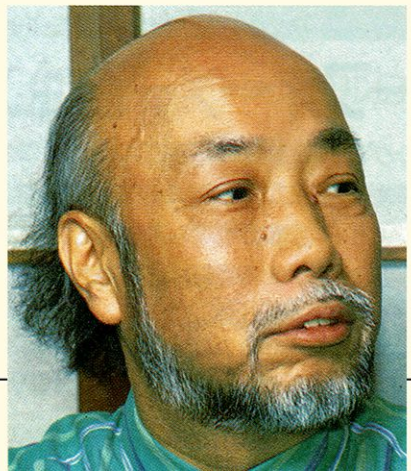
Ishii: In the end, everyone was enjoying this game as if it wasn't work. There are many cases where a picture is drawn over a month and then not actually used for even two seconds.

Tabe: That's the way we used to work in the old days.

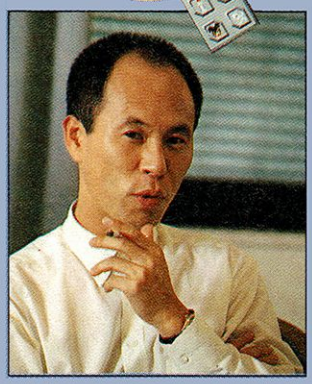
Kinoshita: There are a lot of TV material like that too. Games can be played over and over, but TV shows are only broadcast once. You need to inveest more time on things that are meant to played over and over.

Ishii: People who play the game will end up listening to Tani's "Gachōn" sound effects over and over again.

Tabe: If there are people who are happy with such silly things, then the world will still be fine (laughs). Let's do something silly like this again!



SWITCH
A message from experience



TAKASHI NAKAHATA

This will either be a big hit or a big miss. Tabe-San, he's really good at what he does. The internal, teh timing, the tone... he has a perfect grasp of the difficult parts. I would surely like to work again with him in the future, on a commercial or something like that.

SWITCH

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